THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE ARYAN PATH
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF
OCCULT SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY
AND
ARYAN LITERATURE

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If Theosophists or Christians recognize that the world has gone mad on personalities, can it be made sane by glossing over that madness or pleading expediency? They know it cannot; but they are the creatures of their generation and have not the courage to do that which puts personality out of court in their own cases, and sets the example of a truer, less selfish line of effort. Yet if the change is to be brought about, someone must make the beginning; it is the first step that begins the count, and if the goal is a right and true one, the results can be left to time and Karma. We rest on that.

—Robert Crosbie

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(a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;

(b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th June 1957. VOL. XXVII. No. 8

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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th June 1957. VOL. XXVII. No. 8

SOME THOUGHTS FOR U.L.T. DAY

Outside of initiation, the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective environments and periods. The ideals of both are only the necessary results of their temperaments, and the outcome of that phase of intellectual progress to which a nation in its collectivity has attained.

—H.P.B.

We...find ourselves ground down by the Karma of our national stem, so that we are really almost unable to tell what thoughts are the counterfeit presentments of the thoughts of our forefathers, and what self-born in our own minds.

—W. Q. JUDGE

Only when duty is done for Duty's sake *owed* to the Self of all creatures, will the reward of duties, "higher" to thy mind, present themselves in due and natural order.

—DHAN GARGYA

Next week every U.L.T. centre and all U.L.T. Associates will remind themselves of the noble purposes with which Robert Crosbie led the way in the resuscitation of the disintegrating Theosophical Movement inaugurated by H. P. Blavatsky in 1875 in the city of New York. U.L.T. Day coincides with the culmination of the season on the day of the Summer Solstice. This, the longest day in the year, blesses with warmth and good cheer all men, reminding them that now the great Luminary is curving southwards. The U.L.T. well symbolizes that day, representing as it does the longest period of constructive work on the Original Lines which any visible vehicle of H.P.B.'s Movement has to its credit.

Robert Crosbie was the good shepherd who led the way with a small flock. He had learnt in the school of experience; having weathered storms of his own and having watched other storms which wrecked more than one Theosophical organization, he had gained the necessary knowledge and strength to go forward. Also, he was well equipped with right knowledge, and his experiences had given him a true insight as to what aspects of study and of service should be stressed. The Declaration of the U.L.T. was born of his knowledge-experience and of his insight.

In answering a question about the real man environed by the unreal, he said:—

> As egos, we are only partially operative in bodies; Manas is not yet fully employed by us as a race; each incarnation is but one aspect of our past existences, we have to make the link between higher and lower, while we are in a body.

This short statement offers every individual Associate his opportunity to study, to apply and to advance the work of the Great Cause—to study so as to let the Light of Manas enter the brain made porous; to apply the purifying moral principles of the Esoteric Philosophy; and thus well equipped, to serve the mind of the race by the spoken and the written word. The result will be a double blessing: we will "make the link between higher and lower" within our own consciousness, and thus shall be fit to preach the precepts and to set the example. This is the message of the life and labour of the Friendly Philosopher.

We belong to the race, and its afflictions are ours. Here are some more words of Mr. Crosbie:—

> Race Karma influences each unit in the race through this law of cause and effect by distribution. National Karma operates on the members of a nation through the same law more concentrated. Family Karma governs only with a nation where the families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family—as obtains in every Kali Yuga period—family karma is in general distributed over a nation. All men, having the same principles as constituents of their nature, are connected by both inner and outer principles of their being; they therefore affect each other in subtle and unperceived ways, as well as by the external ways which are ordinarily perceived.

The superficial student is apt to miss the significance contained in these simple words. In essence and substance each one of us is the same as all other men, and yet different. Our individual Karma is linked with the collective Karma. That collective Karma has three main strands: each one of us is joined to the whole race through family and through nation, and this principle which binds the individual unit to the whole should be adequately understood, for it offers the basis for practice in right living.

One thing should be noted: the spiral of evolution produces cycles of time, and humanity is affected by the four *yugas*—the age of gold (*Satya Yuga*), of silver (*Treta Yuga*), of bronze (*Dwapara Yuga*) and of iron (*Kali Yuga*). Our present age is the hard Iron Age, the Dark and Black *Yuga*. It is marked by the peculiar feature that the family unit of today is no more pure and distinct.

There is an acceleration, a speedy movement, towards unification, and each man, each woman, gets an opportunity to do something with himself in this age.

Mr. Crosbie says that individuals feel the effects of collective Karma chiefly through their national Karma. Confusion of castes prevails: the "colour" of the soul is different from that of the body, and so there are misfits and disharmony; each member of a family is different from the other members, and it is not possible for us to conceive in this *yuga* of a pure Pandava family of five brothers, complementing and supplementing one another's work, influenced by one common wife—Draupadi. Family-Races are branches from Sub-Races (*cf. S.D.*, II. 434) and are the parents of many tribes and more groups. Because of the confusion of castes (*varna-sankar*: *cf. Gita*, I. 41) the channel of the family and family *dharma* are vitiated. The student of Theosophy and practitioner of the Esoteric Wisdom is given a very significant teaching for application by Mr. Crosbie in the words quoted above.

Today the principal channel through which collective Karma operates is the nation. The village *panchayat* of ancient India, the city-state, like that of Athens, the dukedoms and small kingdoms of countries like Italy, France, England, have all given place to the larger unit called the nation. Today the nation is the most important unit, though it also must yield place of sovereignty to "the parliament of man, the Federation of the world." Meantime, at this hour the nation plays an important part in the life of the individual citizen. The Theosophical student recognizes what the millions do not know, that collective Karma is at work and that he has a serious duty to his nation.

Through the study and practice of the Esoteric Wisdom the earnest student of today can purify and elevate the family Karma. This can be done not only directly but also indirectly through the channel of national Karma. It is pointed out:—

> If our family duties are well and wisely performed, our duties to the nation and to humanity would to a great extent take care of themselves. By "family duties" and "national duties" is not meant false attachments to family or nation as a means of pride, pleasure-hunting or sensuality, but cultivating and elevating the higher sentiments and emotions of ourselves and of our family and utilizing them for the performance of our duty to the nation and humanity in general.

The student often gives way to family *skandhas* and tendencies and so misses his fine opportu-

nity to redeem the evils inherent in family Karma.

But to turn to national Karma: A false sense of patriotism and national prides and prejudices have steeped us in the sins of hateful wars which nobody favours. The delusive spectre of the sovereignty of nations has to be pierced by the arrow of Wisdom. Nations, great and small, are but parts of a single body, and a non-recognition of this truth is dangerous to the whole race. We who know this truth have the duty and opportunity to pay off our own personal Karma and at the same time to purify and elevate our own nation by the practice of enlightened patriotism. Writes Mr. Crosbie:—

> A very ignorant man may have a strong patriotic feeling which may be aroused to inconsiderate action by himself or through the incitement of others. A more intelligent man would have a wider range of perception and action and yet concur in national sentiment and action against other nations with what he as an individual would consider wrong as against another individual; both of these cases are basically wrong. A truly intelligent patriotism would consider the individual as an integral part of the nation to which he belonged; the nation as an integral part of the assemblage of nations which constitute humanity as a whole....Intelligent patriotism would therefore consist in doing our whole duty in that station where our karma has placed us, to our family, and to humanity as being made up of individuals, families and nations, while recognizing all as being the same in kind and differing only in degree.

Thus we learn some important aspects of our work with and upon ourselves—paying off the debts incurred and at the same time elevating race conditions. Humanity is fast getting ready to apply the principles of Universal Brotherhood and to create the League of Humanity. At the time of the formation of the now defunct League of Nations in 1918-19 Mr. Crosbie said:—

> A league of nations among similar selfish nations can only bring what self-interest always brings—disasters of some kind. The seeds of war are in it.

Raised by the sword of war, the League of Nations perished by the sword. But have the powers, victorious or vanquished, learnt from this? False patriots rattle the swords of war today; a foolish sense of prestige and a pride full of hate prevail. These delusions of prestige and pride have to be destroyed.

> What the past has been, we are experiencing now—our lives now being but repetitions of lives that preceded them. What the future will be, we are making now—the lives to come depending entirely on the choice and direction of our thoughts and actions now.

So, on this occasion, in observing U.L.T. Day, let us think of true patriotism and give the first place to the progress of humanity, vital and necessary for our national progress. Similarly, let our personal and family selfishness be overcome for the good of each and every individual. If we break the fetters of family slavery, social slavery, religious slavery, we shall be helping our nation. India, the Mother, is in chains; she can never be really free when false patriotism lives in the bosom of millions of her sons and daughters. The withdrawal of British troops and British Civil Servants has not made us free. The worst form of slavery is spiritual slavery. A courageous attitude to our national, social and family weaknesses is essential. Real courage is necessary for freeing ourselves from spiritual slavery—courage born of true knowledge.

Edmund Burke in his famous speech on conciliation with America truly said that "slavery is a weed that grows in every soil." The worst of all slaves is he who continues to be enslaved by his own conceit which breeds in him cruelty, by his own egotism which breeds in him envy, by his own narrow-mindedness which breeds in him degrading meannesses. Lust of power is the worst of longings—it is the *tanha* which creates new slaves. Therefore:—

> Better than a man who conquers in battles a thousand times a thousand men is he who conquers himself. He indeed is the mightiest of warriors.

SACRIFICES AND SACRIFICE

O hapless race of men, when that they charged the gods with such acts and coupled with them bitter wrath! What groanings did they then beget for themselves, what wounds for us, what tears for our children's children! No act is it of piety to be often seen with veiled head to turn to a stone and approach every altar and fall prostrate on the ground and spread out the palms before the statues of the gods and sprinkle the altars with much blood of beasts and link vow on to vow, but rather to be able to look on all things with a mind at peace.

—LUCRETIUS: *On the Nature of Things*, Book V.

The great text called the *Bhagavad-Gita* has a universal appeal to politician and poet, philosopher and mystic, aspirant and Adept. Mr. Judge has referred to it as the study of Adepts. To each mind the *Gita* has something to offer; and, what is more, its deeply profound teachings have their simple aspect which touches a person, however short-sighted or shallow-minded he may be. Among these teachings there is one about the oft-cited triad of *Dana-Tapas-Yagna*. Charity; effort at pure living and noble thinking, which is conveyed by the almost untranslatable term *Tapas*; and Sacrifice, which stands generally for *Yagna*, are reiterated and recommended for practice.

We want to consider the value and importance of *Yagna*—Sacrifice. The term has a hoary background and the original concept forms a grandiose Mystery Teaching. Today sacrifice is much extolled, but what prevails is a materialistic view which misleads people. The social aspect of sacrifice with money (the *Dravya-Yagna* referred to in the *Gita*, IV. 28) is today more a veneer than a reality; the veneer strikes the eye of the populace but does not fool its heart. Sacrificing, out of one's abundance, a pittance of money, even with a good motive—though often it is coloured by selfishness and the desire for recognition and reward—is not true sacrifice. Similarly, the religious aspect of *Yagna* is today a superstition, and sometimes a gross, degenerated superstition; *e.g.*, animal sacrifice, practised by the orthodox followers of several religions.

Great Teachers like Krishna and Buddha, Pythagoras and Plato, and others in East and West alike, have ever attempted to bring men and women back to a rational understanding of *Dana*, *Tapas* and *Yagna*, and to their clean and correct practice. It is part of the mission of Theosophy to rescue the grand concept embodied in these terms; in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky much about them is offered for the consideration of students and for the exercise of aspirants and devotees.

The prevailing notion of sacrifice which is respected in our civilization is epitomized as service. Hospitals for the sick in body, asylums for minds diseased, rescue houses for prostitutes, orphanages, homes for the aged and the infirm, and such like, represent the services rendered by organized bodies sustained by donations which the wealthy take out of their purse, but which do not touch the quantity or the quality of their sumptuous breakfast, their well-stocked wardrobes or their many forms of pleasures. In his opening editorial in the very first number of *The Path* (April 1886), W. Q. Judge wrote:—

> Prisons, asylums for the outcast and the magdalen, can be filled much faster than it is possible to erect them. All this points unerringly to the existence of a vital error somewhere. It shows that merely healing the outside by hanging a murderer or providing asylums and prisons, will never reduce the number of criminals nor the hordes of children born and growing up in hot-beds of vice. What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny.

Once a Master wrote to a good-hearted German lady:—

> You have offered yourself for the Red Cross; but, sister, there are sicknesses and wounds of the Soul that no Surgeon's art can cure. Shall you help us teach mankind that, that the soul-sick must heal themselves? Your action will be your response.

From one point of view such social service and sacrifice is superior to the degrading forms of

religious sacrifices—from the burning of candles at the Roman Catholic altars to the killing of goats, etc., at Hindu temples. Jews, Muslims and the followers of other sectarian creeds have similar superstitious "sacrificing," some more, some less objectionable in method.

The present-day degrading superstition of animal sacrifice was practised as a rite of magic in an earlier epoch. W. Q. Judge in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* refers to the sacrifices established for the Jews by Moses (p. 87), and also makes mention of the "peculiar explanation" that has been given of the same (p. 88). That blood has certain occult properties, and that it has the power of absorption and assimilation, was known, and so was made use of in certain magic rites.

"Atonement through blood," says *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 699), "has been too long in the way, and thus was universal truth sacrificed to the insane conceit of us little men."

The knowledge of the magic rite was forgotten, but the evil practice of killing doves and goats has persisted. Orthodox Jews may quote the example of Cain who brought to God "the fruit of the ground" as sacrifice, which did not please the deity; whereas Abel offered "the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (*Genesis*, IV: 4–5). To understand this teaching literally is wrong; for to accept it literally means favouring the vice of cruelty. The allegorical and mystical interpretation should be sought. One such may be considered by the reader: it is in a conversation between the boy Jesus and a rabbi, in the story *Mary* of the well-known Jewish novelist Sholem Asch (pp. 260–61).

In India also the magic rites of blood offerings were known and practised; today the knowledge is gone but the practice continues—a degradation which brings home forcefully the teaching of Lucretius, from which an extract is quoted at the beginning of this article.

Theosophy cannot but condemn every species of animal sacrifice. The great Buddha, too, condemned such irreligious action. We quote some beautiful verses of *The Light of Asia*:—

Round about the pile
A slow, thick, scarlet streamlet smoked and ran,
Sucked by the sand, but ever rolling down,
The blood of bleating victims. One such lay,
A spotted goat, long-horned, its head bound back
With munja grass; at its stretched throat the knife
Pressed by a priest, who murmured, "This, dread gods,
Of many yajnas cometh as the crown
From Bimbisara: take ye joy to see
The spirted blood, and pleasure in the scent
Of rich flesh roasting 'mid the fragrant flames;
Let the King's sins be laid upon this goat,
And let the fire consume them burning it,
For now I strike."

But Buddha softly said,
"Let him not strike, great King!" and therewith loosed
The victim's bonds, none staying him, so great
His presence was. Then, craving leave, he spake
Of life, which all can take but none can give,
Life which all creatures love and strive to keep,
Wonderful, dear, and pleasant unto each,
Even to the meanest; yea, a boon to all
Where pity is, for pity makes the world
Soft to the weak and noble for the strong....
...still our Lord went on, teaching how fair
This earth were if all living things be linked
In friendliness and common use of foods,
Bloodless and pure; the golden grain, bright fruits,
Sweet herbs which grow for all, the waters wan,
Sufficient drinks and meats. Which when these heard,
The might of gentleness so conquered them,
The priests themselves scattered their altar-flames
And flung away the steel of sacrifice.

This was some 2,500 years ago, but even today India reeks with the blood of animals murdered for sacrifices or butchered for food. Cruelty is a sin against God and Nature, and of the many forms of this sin, the killing of beasts and birds is not difficult to stop. In the name of sport also the sin flourishes, and states and churches connive at it.

But go further back in India's history.

Tradition assigns Krishna a definite antiquity; he ends the cycle of the *Dwapara Yuga* and his death marks the beginning of the *Kali Yuga*, 5,000 years ago.

Whatever the mode and procedure of *yagnas*—rites of sacrifice—in the previous cycle, what Krishna stressed in the *Gita* deserves most

serious consideration. Should not Krishna be regarded as one of the highest Planetary Spirits? Theosophy teaches that the highest Planetary Spirits

> appear on Earth but at the origin of every *new* human kind; at the junction of, and close of the two ends of the great cycle. And, they remain with man no longer than the time required for the eternal truths they teach to impress themselves so forcibly upon the plastic minds of the new races as to warrant them from being lost or entirely forgotten in ages hereafter, by the forthcoming generations. The mission of the planetary Spirit is but to strike the KEY NOTE OF TRUTH. Once he has directed the vibration of the latter to run its course uninterruptedly along the catenation of that race and to the end of the cycle—the denizen of the highest inhabited sphere disappears from the surface of our planet—till the following "resurrection of flesh."

Let us see what Krishna has to say about *Yagna*—Sacrifice.

In the Third Chapter the instruction of Prajapati, the Lord of all peoples on earth, is quoted. The kinship of man to the other kingdoms, to the invisible forces and with spiritual intelligences, is stressed. According to what is said, most of us are "thieves," robbing Nature and hoping to go unpunished!

In the Fourth Chapter many kinds and modes of sacrifices are referred to. Born of action are all sacrifices; to gods and godlings, to archangels and angels, to *Ameshaspentas* and *Yazatas*, to the Supreme Spirit under different names, objects are offered as sacrifices. Senses and organs and vitality of body are sacrificed by one mode or another. But it is taught that all such actions purified of their blemishes culminate in Wisdom. Men and women offer their belongings and possessions; such offerings of objects are not enough, so some religious practitioners offer their senses and organs and even breathing; all such ultimately, in one life or through many lives, come to see the value of study, discipline and knowledge as objects of sacrifice; ultimately they come to realize the basic verity:—

> The sacrifice through spiritual knowledge is superior to sacrifice made with material things; every action without exception is comprehended in spiritual knowledge. (*Gita*, IV. 33)

And then, the soul of all practices in spiritual living is proclaimed—that through enquiry and search, humility and service, the disciple is taught by the Seers and Knowers of the Essence of things.

This is the sublime goal, and every man without exception is provided a chance to realize it by bountiful Nature and by the merciful Law.

In the Seventeenth Chapter sacrifices of three types are described, according to their characteristics, derived from the *gunas*, attributes of matter. Motives and methods are involved in any act of sacrifice; Theosophy or the Wisdom-Religion reiterates the teaching offered by the Knowers of Karma. In verses 11 to 13 very definite words are used, and the aspirant to the Inner Life should perceive the superiority of *sattvic* sacrifices, in which both body and consciousness are involved. Dnyaneshwar points to this in his commentary on the verse.

Orthodox Hindus have for long limited the term *Yagna* to religious sacrifices, with *mantras* and *mudras* which have become mummery and gestures. *Yagna* as a principle, as an institution to be used and applied in daily life to mental, moral, verbal and bodily acts, is completely forgotten. Krishna tried to restore its use by those who aspire to tread the Path which leads to the Temple of Initiation.

Therefore we find that there is another teaching on the subject of sacrifice which the *Gita* puts forward in the Ninth Chapter which deals with the Secret Science of *Raja Yoga*, the Royal—*i.e.*, the Superior—Way of Living the Inner Life. The prescription offered for the performance of sacrifices is simple and forthright. It is the way for those who aspire to rise above the three *gunas*. The *Gita* recommends in more than one place that we should rise above the effects of the *gunas*, including *sattva guna*. This sacrifice of the Ninth Chapter, described in verses 26 to 28, follows a very telling piece of instruction in the preceding verse; it is the fruition of the different sacrifices previously mentioned:—

> Those who devote themselves to the gods (*Devas*) go to the gods; the worshippers of the pitris go to the pitris; those who worship

the evil spirits (*Bhutas*) go to them, and my worshippers come to me. (IX. 25)

The highest kind of sacrifice is that offered to "Me," says Krishna. This "Me" has two recognized aspects—(*a*) Man's own Higher Self, and (*b*) the real Guru, the embodiment of the Supreme Spirit, the Most High.

The *Adhi Yagna*, the Great Sacrifice, has a psychological or microcosmical aspect and also a Theogonic or Macrocosmical one; both can be better comprehended by the metaphysical and the purely spiritual aspect.

As students and practitioners of the Secret Science, the life and labour of all aspirants should be dedicated to rising above the three qualities of matter, using the *sattva* quality as a stepping-stone to the higher state.

What state of consciousness should one have to observe the simple-sounding but profound injunctions of Verses 26 to 28 of the Ninth Chapter?

The striver for Supreme Renunciation should offer every thought, word and deed to the Shining Self within. That Self is to receive, by the blessing of the Gracious Guru, the Light from "the star which is thy goal," says *The Voice of the Silence*; and H.P.B. explains in a footnote that "the star that burns overhead is 'the star of initiation.'" This initiation, it is said, reveals the Mystery of Compassion Absolute and its living expression in Those who are the Embodied Great Renouncers. Our one aspiration and only hope should be to attain to that vision by the Self of the True, the Real.

The effulgent end has a beginning. The first step is in front of us, to be taken with knowledge and daring now, today. Leaves of small and passing acts, flowers of beautiful acts and fruits of creative acts should become the offerings to the *Ishwara* in man. That Lord within is ever intent on purifying and elevating the many intelligences on whom he depends; they give him the opportunity to learn and to teach. All these living intelligences, the deities presiding over our own senses and organs, must be made pure by the baptismal water which transubstantiates the gross into the subtle, and makes each deed, each word, each thought, a vibrant sacrament.

Each aspirant has to perform daily actions in the natural course of his life, using his own free will and knowledge. He has to eat to build his body as a shrine of his soul; again, he has to sacrifice himself to fulfil his obligations to his inner life and self-discipline; further, he voluntarily gives of himself and his possessions as gifts—all these are acts of austerity, of mortification, resulting from his *tapas*-meditation, held out as silent, secret and sacred oblations to the Inner Ruler, and to the Guru to whose bidding he has devoted his life and whose Hand is extended in protecting love over him.

By this process the secular life is made holy; the performance of this continuous *Yagna* or sacrifice is the means whereby the good and pious soul who has hitherto undergone human evolution on the Path of Forthgoing, *Pravritti Marga*, enters the *Nivritti Marga*, the Path of Return. No more need he propitiate the *Devas* by rites and ceremonies, following the precedent of Daksha, the Archetypal Ritualist and procreator of the good but mortal man. He now comes under the regenerative power of the Egyptian Thoth, the "Thrice-great Hermes," Shiva-Mahadeva, the Maha Yogi, the Patron Saint of all Yogis, the Archetypal Renouncer, the Teacher *par excellence* of Immortality. He is called "the first divine physician," "for he cures the disease called mortality"; and so he is "the auspicious."

The highest aspect of *Yagna-Vidya* is described by H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* (I. xliv):—

> "The Yajna" exists as an invisible thing at all times; it is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be elicited. It is supposed to extend from the *Ahavaniya* or sacrificial fire to the heavens, forming a bridge or ladder by means of which the sacrificer can communicate with the world of gods and spirits, and even ascend when alive to their abodes.
>
> This *Yajna* is again one of the forms of the Akasa, and the mystic word calling it into existence and pronounced mentally by the initiated Priest is the *Lost Word* receiving impulse through WILL-POWER.

But *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 169) gives warning:—

Without the help of Atma-Vidya, the other three [Yagna-Vidya, Maha-Vidya and Guhya-Vidya] remain no better than *surface* sciences, geometrical magnitudes having length and breadth, but no thickness. They are like the soul, limbs, and mind of a sleeping man: capable of mechanical motions, of chaotic dreams and even sleep-walking, of producing visible effects, but stimulated by instinctual not intellectual causes, least of all by fully conscious spiritual impulses. A good deal can be given out and explained from the three first-named sciences. But unless the key to their teachings is furnished by Atma-Vidya, they will remain for ever like the fragments of a mangled text-book, like the adumbrations of great truths, dimly perceived by the most spiritual, but distorted out of all proportion by those who would nail every shadow to the wall.

The good man who lives the good life to the best of his ability and practises *sattvic* sacrifices must in course of time understand the occult significance of the *Yagna* of *Raja Yoga* taught in the Ninth Chapter of the *Gita*, and thus begin his return journey. Whither will he turn? To the heavenly home of Pure Bliss—Light, Peace or Nirvana? Or to the mysterious retreat of some Great Renouncer of Nirvana itself, there to acquire the Secret of secrets, how to render endless Service to Humanity through many *yugas*, many *kalpas*? There, too, he will learn the hidden meaning and power of *Yagna* and also the right and righteous use of it. The Secret of Service is supreme and is the continuous living out of the *Maha Yagna* allegorized in *The Voice of the Silence*:—

> Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by men; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the "Guardian Wall," such is thy future if the seventh Gate thou passest. Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

ROBOT BRAINS VERSUS HUMAN MINDS

The "Amazing New Uses for Robot Brains" are discussed by Allan Carpenter in an article under that title in *Science Digest* for February 1957. The uses of electronic computers in the field of statistics and mathematics and their various business applications are known to many; what is perhaps not so well known is that these "robot brains" will soon be coming in vogue in almost every sphere of modern living, including the professions as well as the arts.

According to Professor Paul Cromwell, head of the electrical engineering department of the University of Tennessee, electronic "brains" will "extend the effectiveness of doctors, lawyers and members of the other professions."

> "Can you imagine a doctor who could remember every symptom of every disease on earth and recognize them immediately?" asks the Tennessee expert. "A machine might do that."
>
> "Would a lawyer like to be able to find every case in history which had been decided in his favour? A machine might be developed to search for previous cases and produce them in a few minutes," Professor Cromwell continues.
>
> "A research scientist in a given field takes great pains to find every available reference on a given subject. I saw a machine last summer which would do just that—and in a very short time."

To mention but a few of the other applications of electronic computers: Recently a computer made history by composing a musical composition. A concordance for the new revised standard version of the Bible is being prepared electronically, for a machine, it is claimed, can do the job with far greater speed and accuracy than would be possible by only human means. Machines which can translate languages are now in the process of being made. Mechanization may soon take over large portions of the work of educators too; recently in Iowa schoolchildren received grades from completely "inhuman" teachers. A more complicated electronic "brain" "actually

scores tests of the multiple-choice type. The scoring machine weighs the degree of correctness of the answers." Mechanical brains are also being used in the stock market, in criminology, and in the field of entertainment.

Professor John W. Carr, III, is quoted as saying:—

> I have no doubt that electronic computers are going to have a greater impact upon our society than atomic energy! In 15 to 20 years, perhaps less, the electronic-computer industry will be equal to the entire automative industry.

The accomplishments of electronic "brains" are making some enthusiasts conclude that machines can do almost everything the human brain can do—brain being equated by them with mind. "Are not modern computers capable of memory, association, choice and many other functions?" they argue. But even the best of machines can only work according to set patterns. Only the *human* brain can be the instrument of choices for which there are no set patterns. It is absurd to speak of "thinking machines," since they require a human intelligence to feed them with "instructions" and to apply their findings. Creative thought is a process which must for ever remain in the province of the human mind. A machine, moreover, in spite of speed, precision and infallibility, has no sense of values.

Without going into the metaphysics of mind *versus* matter and the powers and faculties of the human mind, the constitution of the brain, the exhaustless generator of force, is itself so complex as to make any comparison with any machine designed by man seem foolish. Not only is there a fundamental difference between the brain and the most "intelligent" of machines, but Occult Science also points to the distinction between mind and brain, the latter being but an instrument of the former. The key to an understanding of the physical brain and its intellect is the dual nature of mind: "the contrast between the laboriously acquired knowledge of the senses and mind (Manas), and the intuitive omniscience of the spiritual divine Soul—Buddhi." The workings of *Kama-Manas*, the mechanisms of the brain-mind, are essentially inexplicable without the concept and the use of the spiritual mind, *Buddhi-Manas*.

Science may still be far from accepting that there is an actual difference between the energy employed by a mechanical "brain" and a human thinking entity, just as it may equally scorn the idea that between an evil and a good thought there exists a discernible difference. Herein lies a fundamental breach between occult and materialistic science. A Master of Wisdom wrote in this connection to a scientifically-inclined correspondent:—

> In conformity with exact science you would define but one cosmic energy, and see no difference between the energy expended by the traveller who pushes aside the bush that obstructs his path, and the scientific experimenter who expends an equal amount of energy in setting a pendulum in motion. We do; for we know there is a world of difference between the two. The one uselessly dissipates and scatters force, the other concentrates and stores it. And here please understand that I do not refer to the relative utility of the two, as one might imagine, but only to the fact that in the one case there is but brute force flung out without any transmutation of that brute energy into the higher potential form of spiritual dynamics, and in the other there is just that. Please do not consider me vaguely metaphysical. The idea I wish to convey is that the result of the highest intellection in the scientifically occupied brain is the evolution of a sublimated form of spiritual energy, which, in the cosmic action, is productive of illimitable results; while the automatically acting brain holds, or stores up in itself, only a certain quantum of brute force that is unfruitful of benefit for the individual or humanity. The human brain is an exhaustless generator of the most refined quality of cosmic force out of the low, brute energy of Nature; and the complete adept has made himself a centre from which irradiate potentialities that beget correlations upon correlations through Æons of time to come. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 29*, p. 3)

PRISONERS AND PENAL REFORM

When crime increases, a community should not turn revengefully against the criminals but should ask itself what is wrong with its own social basis.

—FENNER BROCKWAY in *The Aryan Path* for November 1938.

C. H. Rolph's comprehensive survey of "Prisons and Prisoners" (*The New Statesman and Nation*, London, February 2nd) which takes the form of an open letter to Mr. R. A. Butler, the new Home Secretary, has been aptly described as a "blueprint" for everyone interested in prison reform and the after-care of prisoners. It ought to set people thinking and indicate the need for a changed approach to the unsolved problem of crime. While it is impossible to expect the world to be rid of its offenders overnight, we must guard against adopting a defeatist attitude. We can no longer shut our eyes to prison conditions and to the lot of prisoners.

We continue to be faced with the question, What makes the offender? What makes men and women go against the law? Obviously, it is crime which makes the criminal and not *vice versa*. It is difficult to assign a motive for many offences. Human judgment is fallible; perfect justice would have to take into account a thousand things which cannot be known, even after the best of investigations. Penologists have, however, advanced a number of factors leading to crime, such as economic conditions, personal problems, war, insanity, heredity and so on. The complexity of modern life is no doubt responsible for the increase in the number and variety of crimes. But the idea that inherited traits are responsible for crime can soon be dismissed. Are not crimes committed by people coming from decent families? Besides, what is to happen to the children of a prisoner? Are they to be subjected to social ostracism all their lives on the ground that because their forefathers were criminals they, too, are likely to transgress? Heredity, glandular derangement and the like do not provide a conclusive answer. As Margery Fry says in an article in *The Aryan Path* for March 1954, "You stand, as it were, beside a stream in its lower courses; who can tell what sticks or stones or hoof-marks of fording beasts miles away caused its ripples?" There are a number of factors unknown to judges and juries which have made an offender what he is.

The offender is, in the main, a human being like ourselves, but less fortunate than the average man. The idea of a criminal class, if ever current, has ceased to exist; and no nation or tribe can be said to be entirely or predominantly criminal.

Before we turn to what Theosophy has to say on the subject of crime and criminals and their treatment, it would be well to review the attitude modern penologists are adopting and to consider the penal reforms that are suggested, many of which have already been introduced in some modern countries.

The attitude towards crime has varied through the centuries. Formerly, when a man committed a crime society was up in arms. It sought to wreak vengeance on the culprit and make him suffer for his act. We now regard the "eye for an eye" code as a relic of barbarous times. Revenge is one of the lowest of motives. Further, the punitive approach to crime is ineffective.

It was only gradually that other ways of dealing with wrong-doers came to be recognized. While the feeling of vengeance has not entirely died out, civilized countries are becoming less and less revengeful in their treatment of prisoners. Nowadays the emphasis is on restraint, deterrence and reformation, and not on punishment. Experts in criminology hold that punitive measures do not deter men from wrong-doing; they produce not penitence but resentment in the prisoner. Sometimes, far from deterring a man, punishment only makes him careful not to get caught.

Today, penal reformers aim at the moral reformation of the wrong-doer. Penologists are agreed that offenders must be reformed, but by humane methods. Sentences must aim at the rehabilitation of the offender, at bringing about a change of heart in him. The soiled garment must be washed, not torn. It is not enough to punish him for his past; he must also be equipped

for the future. The duty of the State is to turn bitter and resentful men and women into better citizens, not to confirm them in crime. The criminal has rights which cannot altogether be forfeited, whatever crime he may commit.

It follows, therefore, that prison sentences must be passed sparingly. Warden Lawes, one-time Warden of Sing Sing Prison in the U.S.A., remarked that our aim should be to keep men out of jail rather than in it. It is only when we realize this important principle that we shall have gone some way towards achieving the goal. Further, a constant prison population of minor offenders is a drain on a country's resources.

Some advanced thinkers feel that crime is too serious a matter to be left entirely to the courts. In order to deal effectively with the wrong-doer, knowledge of his mental make-up is required. Judges must be familiar with the circumstances of the offender and with the various kinds of penal institutions in the country. Above all, sentences should depend on the nature of the offender, not on the offence alone.

The case of juvenile delinquents presents a serious problem. Though the offenders are juveniles, there is very often nothing juvenile about their offences, which range from petty pilfering to robbery and violence. The newspapers often carry accounts of teen-agers being sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for offences such as stealing a dynamo bulb or spare parts of vehicles. These child delinquents can be saved from a life of ruin through proper treatment. Children are impulsive and full of energy. What they need is proper guidance to use their energy constructively and not destructively.

It follows, therefore, that juvenile and adolescent offenders cannot be treated in the same way as adult offenders. They should not be condemned outright and classed with the adult professional criminal. Sympathetic treatment is necessary if they are not to become habitual criminals. Separate children's courts and correctional institutions are an absolute necessity if we wish to rehabilitate them. Personal guidance and supervision are features of the modern method of handling teen-age offenders and it is here that hope lies. Since adolescents require special care, the Borstal Schools attempt to develop inmates mentally and morally as well as physically. They have achieved a large measure of success in England, and other countries such as India are making use of this system in dealing with their juvenile delinquents.

The mischief wrought by horror comics is too well known to require elaboration. These comic books glorify crime. The mind of the growing child is particularly susceptible and impressions received and stored during childhood influence its later life.

The problem of how prisoners should be treated has still to be solved. The humanistic approach adopted by modern criminologists is an attempt along right lines. Till the 19th century, the condition of prisons and the plight of prisoners were deplorable and a disgrace to humanity. Formerly, prisons were ill-ventilated, filthy places, where men, women and children were crowded together. They were breeding-places of disease and were known for their inhuman treatment of prisoners. They were a "hell above ground," and even minor offenders used to be sentenced to imprisonment and hard labour.

The change in the treatment of criminals has done much, not only to lighten their lot, but also to check crime. Hatred and revenge have been replaced by sympathy and understanding. It is a mistake to try to terrorize criminals into good behaviour. We must bear in mind that "offenders are sent to prison *as* a punishment, not *for* punishment." Severity and harsh treatment will only harden their minds and hearts.

Under the modern prison system there are separate gaols for men and women, for first offenders and habitual criminals, for those serving short sentences and those serving long-term sentences, and for mental defectives. Prisoners are classified according to physical as well as what may be called mental age. Third-degree methods and flogging, which are as repugnant to modern sensibilities as the mediæval tortures, are being abolished. Whipping can only turn men into brutes. Besides, it has little deterrent effect.

It has been found that open prisons offer the

greatest scope for rehabilitation. Swedish penitentiaries are a striking example of the success of this kind of prison. Prisoners in "open" institutions live in camps and do farming, lumbering or gardening work. They are given the chance to earn. In Bombay, groups of 10 trusted prisoners are sent for Public Works without a guard. There have been very few cases of escape or violation of parole.

In most enlightened countries, prisoners are provided with medical care, recreational facilities and educational and vocational training to enable them to lead a normal life on their release. There has been introduced the remission of sentences for good behaviour. In some countries prisoners are granted regular furloughs after a few years of the sentence have been served.

Gandhiji pointed out that no one committed crime for the fun of it. Crime was a sign of a diseased mind. He had urged that jails should function as hospitals, and public opinion is veering round to this idea.

Effective steps need to be taken to rehabilitate the offender and equip him to face the world once again. The man who commits a crime finds himself outside the pale of the community. He must be helped to rebuild his ties with society and this can be done by restoring his shattered self-respect. A stigma attaches to the man who has been in jail and he very often fails to make good. The blame for this rests on society, which thwarts him in his attempts to make good. It is up to society to see that a discharged prisoner does not relapse into his former ways. Prison authorities must also see to the aftercare of discharged prisoners.

Much has been done, but more remains to be achieved. Penologists are continuing to experiment in the use of group therapy and other techniques which they think are likely to help them in treating offenders. It has come to be recognized that jails must not be overcrowded but must be clean, cheerful buildings where every chance is given the offender to reform himself. Last but not least, the public must be educated and made to take an active interest in the welfare of the prisoner and to recognize that he is first and foremost a human being.

We may draw our readers' attention to a very informative article in *The Aryan Path* for July 1939, entitled "The Ethics of Punishment." The writer, Mr. Abul Hasanat, is the author of *Crime and Criminal Justice* and wrote this article out of long personal experience as Superintendent of Police in Bengal.

Penal reform along these lines is very necessary, but Theosophy has something more to add, which penal reformers would do well to take into consideration. The words of H.P.B. may be recalled at the outset: "For man to take law into his own hand is anyhow a sacrilegious presumption. Human Law may use restrictive not punitive measures" (*The Key to Theosophy*, 2nd Indian ed., p. 198). Karma is sure to bring just retribution to the wrong-doer, and that society which seeks to inflict an additional punishment on him only creates more problems instead of solving any. Two wrongs do not make a right. The truth underlying the saying of Jesus, "with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," is often overlooked. So Theosophy would say—under all circumstances "resist not evil" and "render good for evil."

It might be asked: "Should offenders, then, be allowed to go at large? Should not society be protected against them?" Let us not overlook that society needs greater protection against the countless who *think* evil and who pass unnoticed, spreading corruption and degradation, than against the few who *do* evil. H.P.B. has said:—

> Esoterically, thought is more responsible and punishable than act. But exoterically it is the reverse. Therefore, in ordinary human law, an assault is more severely punished than the thought or intention, *i.e.*, the threat, whereas *Karmically* it is the contrary. (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 142)

Who among us can claim that his thoughts are absolutely pure all the time? To the extent our thoughts are impure, we are responsible for the evil done by others. Thoughts are dynamic and are attracted wherever there is a similar vibration or a suitable soil.

Thus the man of virtue, by admitting a material or sensual thought into his mind, even though he expel it, sends it forth to swell the evil impulses of the man of vice from whom he imagines himself separated by a wide gulf, and to whom he may have just given a fresh impulse to sin. Many men are like sponges, porous and bibulous, ready to suck up every element of the order preferred by their nature. We all have more or less of this quality: we attract what we love, and we may derive a greater strength from the vitality of thoughts infused from without than from those self-reproduced within us at a time when our nervous vitality is exhausted. It is a solemn thought, this, of our responsibility for the impulse of another. We live in one another, and our widely different deeds have often a common source. The occultist cannot go far upon his way without realizing to what a great extent he is "his brother's keeper." (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Indian ed., p. 19)

What a radical change reflection on the above would bring about in our attitude towards crime and criminals! Before we condemn a weak brother who succumbs to evil, let us pause and consider that he is not separate from us, and that we *all* have a share in the wrong done by him. This should offer a scientific, spiritual basis for the humane attitude modern penologists are advocating.

Prevention is better than cure; and so it is being increasingly felt that the best way to tackle the problem is to create conditions which would *prevent* crime. If there are evil-doers in our midst it shows that there is something wrong with the way of life of our modern "advanced" civilization, with the society which has failed to inculcate in them those nobler virtues which would make the very idea of crime repugnant to them. An effective solution of the problem of crime must await the day when society will be based on spiritual principles. Our aim should be, in Mr. Judge's words, to spread broadcast "such a knowledge of proper conduct and a constant practice of the same that every human being is a perfect law unto himself and for all, and that no laws are needed because all know and keep the laws of morality and nature." Our duty is to teach those ethics and that philosophy which alone will remedy the evil by raising men above the possibility of committing crime. To attempt reforms on the surface without going to the root of the matter will not lead us far towards the solution of the problem. On this Plato may be quoted:—

> The greatest cause of them [crimes] is lust, which gets the mastery of the soul maddened by desire; and this is most commonly found to exist where the passion reigns which is strongest and most prevalent among the mass of mankind: I mean where the power of wealth breeds endless desires of never-to-be-satisfied acquisition, originating in natural disposition, and a miserable want of education, the false praise of wealth which is bruited about both among Hellenes and barbarians. (*Laws*, ix)

Only a study of the soul-satisfying doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation and the consequent realization of the soul as the dweller in the body will solve the problem of evil. Soul reform, soul discipline, soul education, must be introduced into the home, the school, the university—and into prisons, *if such be still a necessity*. Such an education would provide a safe and sure method of restoring the individual to normal social life, and, by giving him a knowledge of his higher nature, would enable him to draw from it the power to transmute the tendencies of the lower in such measure as would ensure his not relapsing into crime.

A knowledge of man as a soul and of the after-death states as given in Theosophy should also give us pause when we think about punishment, especially the crucial question of capital punishment. "The true physician cures the disease, and does not kill his patient." On this subject much has already been published, in this magazine and elsewhere in Theosophical literature—*e.g.*, Mr. Judge's article "Theosophy and Capital Punishment," reprinted in *Vernal Blooms*, and *Theosophical Free Tract No. 18*, bearing the same title—to which those interested are referred.

THE BEWITCHED MIRROR

[The following narrative by Prince A. Tzeretelef first appeared in *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, pp. 230–32, for June 1880. We reprint it because it illustrates the following facts: (1) Certain old beliefs have a basis of truth, and phenomena such as the one here described by Prince Tzeretelef are genuine and not "all bosh" as skeptics are inclined to dismiss them. (2) Such phenomena are observable only by persons of a peculiar temperament, having certain psychic idiosyncrasies. (3) Such persons had better not experiment evoking "spirits" and the like--unless they wish to be appalled by ghostly apparitions!—Eds.]

A few years ago I purchased at Moscow an old and long-deserted house. The whole building had to be repaired and almost rebuilt. Unwilling to travel from Himky, my summer residence, to town and back several times a week, I decided to superintend the work personally and to take up my abode on the premises. As a result of this decision, a room was hastily prepared for me in the main building. It was in August; all my acquaintances and friends had left the city; nowhere to go, no one to talk with; it was the dullest period in my life.

Once—as I well remember it was on the 27th of August—after passing the whole morning in the intellectual occupation of disputing with the carpenters, having rows with the masons, and debates with the furniture men, and thus spoiling several ounces of blood—a torture known but to Moscow proprietors—I was sulkily eating my dinner at the Gourinsk Inn, when—O, joy! I met with two old and valued friends. I pounced upon them and would not let them go before they had accompanied me home, and taken a cup of tea with me. After having more or less animated debates, the conversation chanced to turn upon Spiritualism. As a matter of course, none of us believed in spirits, every one of us hastening to bring forward the threadbare and commonplace arguments which usually serve such occasions.

"Do you know, Yurey Ivanovitch," said to me one of my friends, "that I was actually assured the other day that there was nothing in the world more terrifying for a person than to stand alone, at midnight, before a mirror, and with two lighted candles in one's hands, to thrice repeat loudly and slowly one's own name, without dropping the eyes from the reflected image? I was told that it produced the most awful feeling of nervousness. Few men are capable of such a feat."

"It's all bosh," remarked his companion, getting up to take his leave of me. "This superstition is of the same kind as that other one, of being unable to eat champagne out of a soup-plate with a large spoon, without perceiving the devil at the bottom of the plate. I tried it myself and nothing happened. However, you can make the mirror experiment yourself. In your deserted and empty house, the thing must come out quite solemn. Well, goodbye; it is getting late, and our train leaves tomorrow at nine."

They went away. My servant came to enquire whether I needed him for anything else, and, being answered in the negative, went off to bed at the other end of the large house, where he slept in some far-off hole. I was left alone.

I feel positively ashamed to confess what happened after that—yet I must do so. How the idea of trying that experiment with the mirror could have ever entered into my head—the head of a respectable husband, father of a large family, and a Judge—I know not, but it did. It was like an obsession. I looked at my watch, it was a quarter to twelve—just the very time. Taking a lighted candle in each hand, I proceeded to the ballroom.

I must tell you that the whole width of my new house was occupied by a large and very long hall lighted with windows at the two ends. It was just then under repairs. Along the walls there stood scaffoldings and the place was full of lumber and rubbish. At one side an enormous glass-door opened into the conservatory and garden; at the opposite one there was a gigantic looking-glass over the mantelpiece. A better spot for the evocation of spirits could hardly be

found. It is with difficulty that I can now describe or account for the state of my feelings, while I was passing along the deserted and gloomy passage leading to the ballroom. I had been so thoroughly annoyed during the whole day, so prosaically irritated, that my mental state could hardly be favourable to experiments of such a kind. I remember well, that upon pushing the heavy doors open, my attention was drawn to the once elegant, but now very damaged, carving upon it, and that I was calculating how much money I would have to lay out for its thorough reparation. I was calm, completely calm.

When I entered, I was caught in an atmosphere of decay, dampness, whitewash, and fresh lumber. The air was heavy; I felt oppressed with heat, and yet chilly. The enormous windows, stripped of their blinds and curtains, stared in oblong black squares upon the naked walls; the autumnal rain (which I had not even suspected while in my room) was drizzling against the window panes; trembling at every gust of wind, the glass rattled in the old window-frames: while the draught, creeping through the crevices and key-holes, whined and sung, filling the old house with mournful cadences. The very sound of my footsteps seemed to awaken a strange and weird echo....I stopped—but the sound did not stop with me at once; it went on slowly dying away until it broke with a soft and wearisome sigh....

A strange sensation suddenly and irresistibly got hold of me. It was not fear—no, but a kind of sickly, melancholy feeling in the heart. Aroused by the silence reigning in this old uninhabited mansion, and by the unusual surroundings, there now awoke at the bottom of my soul much of that long-forgotten past which had slumbered for so many years amid the wear and tear of commonplace daily life. Who knows whence and why these unbidden guests now came trooping before the eyes of memory, bringing forth a series of pictures with them; scenes of early childhood and youth; remembrances and sweet recollections, hopes unfulfilled; and grief—heavy sorrows which I had lived through and thought over. All this arose at once and simultaneously with its images of the past and the present; crowding in upon me at all sides, it confused and entangled the clearly defined pictures, and replaced them with vague recollections. But, as in our dreams, when the sorrow of the preceding day as well as the expected joy of the morrow never leave us completely free from their grip, so over all these dreamy recollections, whether joyful or melancholy, spread, like the cold and heavy mist of the autumnal rainy day, the cold and dull reality....A hopeless, an unaccountable weariness got hold of me, enveloping my whole being as in a ghostly shroud....

The sudden noise of a rat, disturbed in its nocturnal wanderings, put an abrupt stop to the wanderings of my imagination. I slowly approached the mirror, pulled off its brown hollow cover, and shuddered at my own reflection: a pale, sorrowful face, with dark flickering shadows upon it, looked at me with an unfamiliar expression in its eyes and upon its stern features. I could hardly realize it was my own. The whole interior of the large hall with its lumber and scaffolding, its veiled statues, and the enormous garden door, at the end of a double row of pillars, was reflected in the mirror. The weak, wavering light of the two wax candles was hardly able to chase the darkness lying in thick black shadows under the lofty ceiling, upon which the heavy chandeliers with their innumerable crystal drops painted fantastic spots; from my legs extended two gigantic shadows, branching off upon the inlaid floor and merging into the penumbra of the corners; at every movement these shadows ran swiftly right and left, now lengthening, at another moment shortening. Again, I glanced at my watch; it wanted three minutes to midnight. Placing a chair before the looking-glass, I laid my chronometer upon it, and with the two lighted candles clenched in my hands stood before the mirror, awaiting midnight. All was quiet and the silence around was profound. Nought was heard but the ticking of my watch, and the occasional fall of a rain-drop passing through the old leaky roof. And now, the watch-hands met; I straightened myself up, and, firmly looking upon my own countenance in the mirror, pronounced slowly, loudly and distinctly, "Y—u—r—ey I—va—no—vitch Ta—ni—shef!"

If I had failed before to recognize my own face, that time I was utterly unable to recognize my own voice! It was as if the sounds reached me from far, far off; as if the voice of another somebody had called me. I went on staring at myself, though never taking off my eyes from the face. The reflection had become paler still, the eyes seemed immeasurably enlarged and the candles trembled violently in *its* hands. All was quiet; only my two shadows began moving swifter than ever; they joined each other, then separated again, and all at once began rapidly growing, elongating themselves, moving on higher and higher...they slipped along the veiled statues, flung their clear-cut, black patches upon the white walls, climbed along the pillars, separated upon the ceiling and began approaching nearer and nearer...."Yu—rey I——vano—vitch Tanishef!" I slowly pronounced again my name; and this once, my voice resounded in the old hall more muffled than ever. There was in it something like a note of sorrow, reproach, and warning....No, this voice, so soft, with tones in it so broken, was *not my voice!* ...

It was the familiar voice of some one I knew well, who was near and dear to me....I heard it more than once, whether in my dreams or waking hours....It had hardly died away, when a window-pane, jingling and tinkling under a new gust of wind, suddenly burst. It was as if a harp-chord had broken; its pure, metallic ring filled the room, and was caught up by the wind which began its long and lugubrious dirge, a song of awe and sorrow....Unable to resist the first impulse, I took off my eyes for one instant from the mirror, and was going to turn abruptly round, when suddenly recollecting that I had to keep my eyes fixed upon it all the time I looked again, and—remained rooted to the spot with horror....

I found myself no more in the looking-glass!... No; I was not asleep, neither was I insane; I recognized every smallest object around me: there was the chair with my watch upon it; and I saw distinctly in the mirror every part of the room reflected; the scaffolding and statues, and the drop-lights were there, all of them as they were before....But my shadow had also disappeared, and I vainly searched for it upon the inlaid floor. I...I myself had gone, and was there no more!...

An inexpressible wild terror got hold of me. Never, in the range of the experience of my whole life, had I experienced anything approaching this feeling. It seemed to me as if I were living over this same event for a second time; that all this had happened to me before, on the same spot, illuminated by that same flickering light, in this same identical, heavy, gloomy silence...that I had experienced all this, and had waited here before now...feeling that something was going to happen, that it noiselessly approached, that invisible and inaudible, it is already near the door, that this empty ballroom is a stage, whose curtain is slowly rolling up, and that one second more, one more effort, but to pronounce once more my name...only once... and that door will noiselessly open....

The name, the name...I have to pronounce it for the third and last time....I repeated over and over to myself mentally, trying to summon up my courage and collect my thoughts. But all my will-power had gone. I felt like one petrified; I was no longer my own self, but *a part* of something else; I could not and did not think; I only instinctively felt that I was being irresistibly drawn into a vortex of fatal events, and went on staring like a maniac into the mirror, in which I saw the empty hall with everything in it, but—myself!

With a desperate superhuman effort, I shook off that state of paralysis and began to utter my name for the third time: "Yur—ey Ivano—vitch Ta.....!" but my voice broke down, and my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, at the shrill, trembling, extraordinary tones which made the whole house vibrate with echoes in the midst of this ominous silence. The wind howled and moaned, the doors and windows violently trembled, as the knob of the entrance door slowly but audibly and distinctly turned.... Uttering a shriek of terror, I threw down both the lights and pressing my head between my palms, rushed out of the room like a madman.

What happened after that I know not. I came

to my senses only in the morning, when I found myself in bed, in my own room, and with a dim mist working in my brain. Gradually I recalled all the incidents of the preceding night, and was just going to decide in my own thoughts that the whole was but a dream, when my servant handed me, with a look of blank amazement, my watch and the two candlesticks that the workmen had just found before the uncovered mirror in the ballroom.

I have narrated a FACT: though to explain it is more than I could undertake. One thing I know well, I will evoke myself before a looking-glass no more, and strongly advise others never to attempt the experiment.

[As a result of the publication of the above report, appeared two months later the following Note by Babu Asu Tosh Mitra. It is reprinted from *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, p. 284, for August 1880.—EDS.]

TESTING THE BEWITCHED MIRROR THEORY

The facts, related under the title of "The Bewitched Mirror" in the THEOSOPHIST of June last, must have excited curiosity, if nothing else, in the minds of all its readers. At the suggestion of my friend Babu Avinas Bheendra Banerjee, L.M.S., I decided to make the trial myself; and on the very day I received the suggestion, I made arrangements, very simple as they were, to repeat Prince Tzeretelef's experiment. We did not consider it "all bosh," as the companion of Mr. Ivanovitch's friend remarked, neither did we take it to be like the one "of being unable to eat champagne out of a soup-plate with a large spoon, without perceiving the devil at the bottom of the plate." We admit that we are not spiritualists, but we are truth-seekers and do not, like many, consider it *infra dig* to give any attention to spiritualism; and we are always glad to spare both time and trouble to make any research in that secret science.

Our field of experiment was a room within the compound of the Medical College, Calcutta, known as the Prosector's Room—where more than a thousand dead bodies have been dissected. It was quite solitary.

After half-past eleven at night, I entered the room, taking a lighted candle in each hand, and slowly approached the mirror in which was reflected part of a skeleton which stands at a little distance. I glanced at my watch: it was a couple of minutes to the time. Meanwhile I was pondering over a serious subject—soul, its immortality, its destiny, etc.; my thoughts coming and going by flashes.

All was quiet. In an adjacent hall the clock struck—tong, tong, tong—twelve times. I straightened myself up and, firmly looking upon my own reflection in the mirror, pronounced slowly, loudly, and distinctly "A—su—To—sh—Mi—tra"! Finished. I kept my eyes fixed upon the mirror, quite forgetting the external world.

After a good long time (nearly five minutes), I repeated my name for the second time. No change in the mirror, neither anything mystical in myself. My hands and legs were paining, my eye-sight was growing dim, as is natural when one stares long at one object continuously. I repeated my name for the third time, but nothing came of it. At last, being disappointed, I went off and found it was twenty minutes after twelve. I repeated the experiment on three subsequent nights with similar results. On the fifth day, my friend Babu Gopal Chunder Mookerjee tried it in a separate room, and he also was unsuccessful.

I would like to know if any other reader of the THEOSOPHIST has tried it, for it might be that the effects described happen only with certain persons.

Medical College, Calcutta,
10th June 1880.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR

The experimental plan, followed in this instance by the Babu, is the only one by which it may be discovered how much truth there is in the time-honoured legends, traditions and superstitious observances of modern nations. If his and his friend's tests prove nothing else, they certainly

show that not every one who invokes himself in a mirror at midnight by the light of two candles, will, of necessity, be appalled by ghostly apparitions. But his own common sense has probably suggested what is no doubt the fact of the case, *viz.*, that the phenomena described by Prince Tzeretelef, in our June number, are observable only by persons of a peculiar temperament. This is certainly the rule in every other department of psychic phenomena. As regards the "Bewitched Mirror" tale, we printed it as an illustration of the oldest of Slavic beliefs, leaving it to the reader to put the test or not as pleased him best.—Ed., The Theosophist

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LIVING TRUTH

"...thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond."

The U.L.T. is an organism for which the Truth of Theosophy is the breath of life if it enters into a living relationship with it. The characteristics of life are that it ever renews itself, it takes from as well as gives to other forms of life, and it gives birth to new forms. Otherwise it becomes a soulless corpse in which the work of destruction and renovation is taken over by nature.

Applying this to the U.L.T., three factors must be considered: the Spirit, the Soul and the Body of the former. The Spirit is the Great Lodge of Masters whose single Will keeps in being the Theosophical Movement; the Soul is formed by those students whose inner development has made of them the focal point towards which the influences of the Spirit are directed and from which information and spiritual influence radiate, and which therefore forms the connecting link between the Spirit and the body; the body is formed after the ideal plan outlined in Theosophy, but is also adapted to the needs of time and circumstance. The last is the method of accurate and impersonal presentation of Theosophy; it is the pattern of its meetings and its magazines; it is the mutual relation between students on the outer plane; it is everything that provides an avenue of expression for the Spirit and the Soul.

The continued existence of the U.L.T. as a living organism depends upon soul and body. The body not ensouled by the ever-present thought of Masters in the inner consciousness of its Associates is a corpse. The thought which does not express itself in action atrophies.

The further development of the U.L.T. as such a living centre pertains to the science and art of magic, or to the knowledge of how the omniscience and omnipotence of the Spirit may be acquired in the body and the art of the practical application of this knowledge. It requires deliberate and constant thought and effort directed towards that end. Before we are called upon to do big things for the Masters we must show ourselves able enough to do small things in a big way. Let the Masters be the hidden Presence at our U.L.T. meetings as well as in our hearts. Let us do each task, prepare each U.L.T. assignment, as Their work and as if in that Presence. By acquiring accurate knowledge of the Masters, Their attributes, Their work and Their philosophy, we can learn to visualize Them accurately. Learning to visualize Them, we can increase our faith in Them as living Elder Brothers. The likeness of the Masters enters into us and ensouls our work, but that likeness has still to be stamped by the power of the will on the outer form of the U.L.T. That brings us to our third factor.

Hitherto it has been the fate of each religious movement to lose its soul and retain only a *kamarupa*—a portion of that soul united with the institutions it has established. This *rupa* may linger for centuries and even revive into a fictitious life. To keep the U.L.T. from that fate it will not be sufficient to preserve its institutions: its study of certain books, its method of anonymity and of questions and answers, its continual repetition of its Declaration of Policy, of the First Item and the Three Fundamental Propositions. By themselves these are but forms, not essentially different from the forms of any

church. To these forms the Associates must give life. The writing of an anonymous article for a Theosophical magazine, for instance, should be the final fruit of the individual's own efforts to understand and live the life, offered in the hope that it may become the seed of some fresh growth. Only when the article is written in that spirit does the act of withholding the author's name become an act of significance. Questions and their answers are of little value unless preceded by strong search. Then both questioner and answerer evoke an understanding in the mind of each other which was not there before. Repetition of platform assignments will be a fruitless exercise unless we preserve a freshness of mental approach which does not lose sight of the purpose of such repetition and at the same time treats each repetition as an adventure into the realms of knowledge.

All this requires an alertness which does not let any chance or opportunity slip by, as well as a sustained effort of will in the face of the natural conservatism and inertia of human nature. The U.L.T. has been a pioneer and we must want it to remain so, because if we do not keep alive the pioneering spirit possibly no one will do so. A pioneering spirit implies a continual return to the source of our inspiration as well as a continual advance along new pathways. A lack of the pioneering spirit means that our motion is that of a fly-wheel which is kept going by the momentum given to it originally.

In likening the institutions of the U.L.T. to the physical body to which the soul must give life, we can usefully push the analogy a little further. The body is formed after an inner pattern and receives life from within, but it must also develop in response to outer needs and circumstances.

We can illustrate part of our meaning in another field. Through secret fear many who have drawn help and inspiration from the Bible have closed their minds to the results of scholarly analyses of the Bible and research into its origins, and vehemently asserted their belief in its verbal inspiration. A wiser course for them would have been to use the results of the scholars to cleanse their own understanding of wishful thinking, so that any essential truth that the Bible might contain would stand forth the more clearly. In so doing they would have done the world a greater service, for it would have been less inclined to throw away that truth with the mass of falsehood and superstition which has clung to it.

Theosophists are quite capable of and do make the same kind of mistake. First we must distinguish between essential truth and our understanding of it, which must always fall short of truth itself and is almost certainly adulterated with elements of wishful thinking. We do not want to waste our energy in making ourselves secure in our present understanding. Furtherance of that understanding demands study of and meditation on the teachings of the Masters, followed by creative and constructive application in the world of thought of our fellow men.

Again let us illustrate. Mr. Judge has answered many objections to reincarnation on the grounds of heredity in his *Ocean of Theosophy*. What he then said is still valid, but simply to repeat that unintelligently as if nothing had changed since then and no new discoveries been made does no service to Theosophy or to the memory of Mr. Judge. It is not suggested that all students must make themselves familiar with recent discoveries and conceptions in this particular realm, but all should maintain an attitude of open-mindedness and alertness and avoid this *tamasic* tendency of wanting to preserve our present understanding of Theosophy on the subject of heredity which might be disturbed by new facts. More important still, particularly if he seeks to relate them to moral and spiritual development, he will help to implant in the world of thought new conceptions which must be seized upon sooner or later by other minds working in this particular field. These minds will be unaware of the source of their supposedly original ideas, but another lesson we have to learn is to "step out from sunlight into shade."

Not only through mental inertia but also through a subtle pride can we raise a barrier between ourselves and other men, which will prevent the full and fruitful interplay between what we have to give them and what they have to give us. Unconsciously, our very insistence on

the policy of the U.L.T. and our education in that policy can lead to this pride and to a certain narrowness of outlook, while our understanding of Theosophy crystallizes into attitudes towards others. These attitudes hamper and thwart our humanity. A useful corrective in this respect is a sense of humour which enables one not to take oneself too seriously.

What is of paramount importance, however, is that

> Theosophy is essentially unsectarian, and work for it forms the entrance to the Inner life. But none can enter there save the man himself in the highest and truest spirit of Brotherhood, and any other attempt at entrance will either be futile or he will lie blasted at the threshold.

The most important aspect of this spirit is a sense of identity with our fellow workers, but this will reflect itself in a sense of communion with real Theosophists everywhere. Consider also another statement in *Five Messages*:—

> Were it not, also, for the existence of a large amount of uncertainty in the minds of students of Theosophy, such healthy divergences would be impossible, and the Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever growing Knowledge.

Among the uncertainties we can count many major contemporary problems: the responsibilities of the individual in the Welfare State; the problem of introducing a new set of values after the discrediting of many old religious values and the shattering effect of two World Wars; the problem of integrating the scientific approach to truth with the religious and the philosophical; the moral responsibility of scientists for the use made of their discoveries; the problem of producing the technicians required in this age, who shall also be men of real culture, ready to think about the deeper problems of life; the impact of Western technology and ways of life on the traditional ways in the East, and so on.

There are individuals working on these problems who, because they are prepared to leave their well-worn paths to strike out in new directions, because they have a feeling of human brotherhood and of the innate divinity of man, are true Theosophists. We have much that we can give them, but there is also much we can receive from them. They can help us to understand the full extent and the real nature of the problems we have to solve. It was that we might help in their solution that the Masters gave us Theosophy. This is made abundantly and repeatedly clear in the Great Master's Letter (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 33*). The Master writes to the effect that if their doctrines will show their competence to offer "right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles, right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism," then the world will begin to accept Theosophy as the TRUTH. While remaining true to the principles of our Declaration, we must at the same time shape our efforts with an awareness of the world's problems and a sense of kinship with all men of good will who are trying to find the solutions. We must be free of all spiritual pride. Our *dharma* is to be the channel for fructifying waters, not the proud possessors of knowledge.

"DO WE SURVIVE DEATH?"

Britain's influential *Sunday Times* recently invited many distinguished people to attempt an answer to the question "Do we survive death?" This has started one of the greatest newspaper-column controversies of recent years. The opinions of some of the intellectuals and churchmen who participated in the debate were published by the *Sunday Standard* (Bombay) of March 17th.

Bertrand Russell, the eminent scientific philosopher, said that the belief in survival after death had no scientific basis and that it arose simply as an emotional reaction to the fear of death. However, only two per cent of the scores of rejoinders which his article provoked were in support of his argument. The rationalist Russell was accused by many of making the same mistake

as other great thinkers in using reason "in an attempt to weigh imponderables." His Highness the Aga Khan stated that "reasoning, which is the work of the material brain, can never grasp spiritual truth, which can only be discerned through illumination and enlightenment."

The Right Reverend B. C. Butler, the Roman Catholic Abbot of Downside, presented the orthodox theological view that heaven is the reward of those who live lives which are good, in accordance with Christian tenets; "if we choose to live in defiance of them, we shall be forced to endure unending separation from God, which is the equivalent of hell." This again provoked a flood of criticism. Antony Flew, Professor of Philosophy at the University College of North Staffordshire, found the prospect presented by the worthy Abbot "appalling": "It is to my mind a horror unspeakable that anyone at all should live eternally in utter, unending and hopeless misery."

Among the participants in the debate, perhaps the one who arrives nearest to the Theosophical view is Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding. He believes firmly that "everyone has an etheric double which acts as a kind of intermediary between our earthly personality and the spirit world, and which is shed by the soul at the time of death along with the physical body." He claims to have been in direct communication with men who were killed suddenly in battle and who, "not having been able properly to shed their etheric doubles, are still in an 'earthbound' state."

One of those who found Lord Dowding's declaration invigorating after the dispiriting orthodoxy, both agnostic and religious, of some previous witnesses, was the Rev. Dr. Frederick A. M. Spencer of Oxford University. He maintains that there is no such thing as eternal punishment and that the idea of reincarnation is implied in several of Christ's sayings. Dr. Julian Huxley, on the other hand, believes neither in survival after death nor in a "divine purpose" behind evolution.

The Theosophical view on the subject is too well known among our readers to need elaboration here. Though to some the answer to the question "Do we survive death?" appears to be a "mystery," on the other hand more than half of the earth's inhabitants, especially in the East, believe in the soul's immortality and in the related doctrine of reincarnation. The popularity which the idea of rebirth is gaining in the West is a hopeful sign. It is an ever-recurring theme in today's literature; and though many distorted and false views prevail, both in the East and in the West, sincere and earnest minds who inquire into the subject and seek a logical and convincing answer to the problems of life are bound to arrive ultimately at the correct, philosophical idea of evolution through successive lives on earth as presented by the Ancient Wisdom.

Man has ever asked for proofs of immortality. "Who ever saw the Immortal Spirit of man, so as to be able to assure himself of man's immortality?" No proof can be convincing enough unless the deeper realization comes from within. It stands to reason that that which is subjective cannot be proven objectively. The sages and saviours of all times have given us the philosophical and logical bases upon which must rest the belief in survival after death as well as in prior existences. The path of true experimentation has been pointed out by them, and their testimony is unanimous as to the facts. All these are, or should be, to the individual soul, no more than good and sufficient reasons to follow the path of experiment for himself, consciously and knowingly. They are not "proof." The only *proof* of immortality is the conscious experience of it by the individual himself. The teachings of Theosophy are not only philosophical, religious and scientific in the highest and true sense of those terms; they are also practical, for when applied by each individual for himself, he becomes conscious of former existences, of extra-corporeal existence, of other states of consciousness and other worlds of being, with precisely the same certainty that he is conscious of this waking corporeal existence and its surroundings. His knowledge and vision expand. But he cannot transfer his knowledge or experienee to another. How could he?

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* H.P.B. remarks upon two kinds of dreams—prophetic and warning.

1. Prophetic dreams. These are impressed on our memory by the Higher Self, and are generally plain and clear: either a voice heard or the coming event foreseen.

2. Warning dreams for others who are unable to be impressed themselves.

3. It may be said, in the case of persons who have truly prophetic dreams, that it is because their physical brains and memory are in closer relation and sympathy with their "Higher Ego" than in the generality of men.

4. Dreams of warning and premonition require the active co-operation of the inner Ego. They are also often due to the conscious or unconscious co-operation of the brains of two living persons, or of their two Egos.

These points are interesting to remember in considering an account from Doncaster in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which defies materialistic explanations. It was published in *The Deccan Herald* (Bangalore) on May 4th. It is reported that a Mrs. Mary Raynes dreamt she saw her husband tumbling out of a car wrecked by collision with a lorry; that his legs were severely injured and that the driver of the car was slumped over the wheel dead.

Her husband's response to her appeal to him the next morning to call off the trip to Bradford that he had planned was, "Nonsense!"

The account includes Mr. Raynes's testimony at the coroner's inquest on the sudden death of Shri Shashikant Prabhudas Gundevia, an Indian research chemist who accompanied Mr. Raynes on the trip:—

> I drove to Bradford myself but let Mr. Gundevia drive back. I had my wife's dream on my mind and would not let him go fast. But as we neared Doncaster, a lorry in front swung across the road into a garage. It blocked the road. I shouted to the driver to stop but nothing happened. Then we hit the lorry.

The account concludes laconically: "Mr. Gundevia was killed and Mr. Raynes had a broken leg and thigh injuries."

The warning dream, unheeded, proved to have been a prophetic one.

In a recently published French article, M. Charles Antoine discusses the part the so-called "harmful" animals play in preserving the balance of Nature. It is pointed out that a mass attack against such animals can prove disastrous. If man attacks some pest, he finds that by eliminating it he has only prepared the way for an even worse one. By destroying one species other species, on which the former used to prey, multiply and become a menace to crops. For instance, when leopards were destroyed in Africa wild pigs and baboons which were the leopard's main food began doing great damage to the harvests.

By experience, man is gradually learning to modify his conception of what is "harmful" in Nature. There is a growing body of thinkers who are raising their voice against man's interference with the economy and balance of Nature. Even what we consider to be harmful species of animals and plants have their own place in the scheme of things and have as much a right to survive as we have. Good and evil in this world seem inextricably mixed up. Even certain poisons, properly used, have a curative effect. Such is the economy of Nature that there is not a creature on earth but serves some purpose, though man often fails to perceive it. Shall man persist in disturbing the natural order and producing discord and disharmony? Nature shall hit back and bring disaster on him. Shall he protect Nature and become a co-worker with her? Nature shall become his ally, pupil and servant, and make obeisance. The choice is ours.

In *The New Statesman and Nation* of April 20th "Polycritic" sounds a warning which those

carried away by the current craze for vitamins would do well to heed:—

> The eminent nutritionist, Dr. Hugh Sinclair, has pointed out that unlimited milk for children may hasten chronic degenerative disease; that orange juice is not an ideal form of vitamin C, nor cod-liver oil the best source of vitamins A and D. I've no doubt that his remarks will be construed as an attack on welfare services. That is rubbish; but the tenor of his warning should not be ignored. Good things in diet can be a liability in excess. It is possible to over-vitaminise—and there is plenty of high-pressure advertising to persuade us to do so. This is particularly true during the summer months—a good summer, that is—when nature is herself prodigal with natural vitamins. There is even a scientific possibility that polio, that disease of highly prosperous and healthy communities (and of the summer months), may be encouraged, though not caused, by a surfeit of vitamins. And it is true that, while impoverished peoples may be starving, surtax society may be digging its grave with its own (generally false) teeth. Rich feeding can shorten lives —thickening the arteries and causing "fatty heart"; and, in that sense, people can be malnourished by over-eating as well as by under-eating. It's *a little* of what you fancy that does you good.

For would-be practitioners of the divine discipline the observance of temperance or of the golden mean in all things, including diet, is most essential. There is a relation between the food we give to the body and the ego who owns that body, and for that reason eating, was once, and in some quarters still is, regarded as a rite. One of the obvious rules of that rite is that no more and no less be taken than needed; that overindulgence—whether for the sake of sheer enjoyment or out of ignorance of the requirements of the body—on the one hand, and improper nourishment—resulting also from ignorance of bodily requirements or from a false idea of asceticism—on the other hand, be eschewed. The main thing is to keep the body efficient as an instrument for the soul who inhabits it, by whatever means and food may be found necessary for that purpose. Says Manu:—

> Excessive eating is prejudicial to health, to fame, and to (bliss in) heaven; it prevents (the acquisition of) spiritual merit, and is odious among men; one ought, for these reasons, to avoid it carefully. (II. 57)

At the present time when the use of vitamins is widespread throughout the "civilized" world, not only in the treatment of disease, but also by apparently normal persons, the warning contained in the above-quoted words is timely. It is necessary for us to realize that the indiscriminate use of even a good thing can do great harm.

True to H. P. Blavatsky's prophetic pronouncement that "future experimenters will reap the honour of demonstrating that musical tones have a wonderful effect upon the growth of vegetation" (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 514), one is agreeably surprised to read in *The Times of India* (March 31, 1957) that recent large-scale research into the sensitivity of plants is having astonishing results. According to the report:—

> When "entertained" by carefully selected music, says a scientist, plants have been found to grow faster. And many plants show a marked preference for girl crooners.
>
> If you are still incredulous, Dr. C. T. N. Singh, who has spent some years on this kind of research, should convince you. He says he has treated sugarcane, tapioca, sweet potatoes and other plants to soothing music with amazing results.
>
> His first visual proof that plants have an ear for music was when he saw a movement in a hydrilla leaf as he played tunelessly on a metal rod. The plant *knew* he was playing out of tune, he says.

The response of plants to music has been observed since the days of Orpheus of Greece and of Jaydev and Tansen in India, or even earlier. No longer can one now afford to dismiss ancient references to this effect as fanciful, with so much scientific evidence on hand. When Shakespeare remarks that

> Orpheus with his lute made trees,
> And the mountain-tops that freeze,
> Bow themselves, when he did sing,

it is not merely a poetic sentiment he is indulging in, but is an important reminder of the magical power of music, so well known to the ancients,

which is clearly brought out in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 411):—

> ...every sound awakens a corresponding one in the invisible world of spirit, and the repercussion produces either a good or bad effect. Harmonious rhythm, a melody vibrating softly in the atmosphere, creates a beneficent and sweet influence around, and acts most powerfully on the psychological as well as physical natures of every living thing on earth; it reacts even on inanimate objects, for matter is still spirit in its essence, invisible as it may seem to our grosser senses.

It is gratifying to note that this type of research on the influence of music on vegetation has slowly become popular in India ever since Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose's investigations into the subject. Proving that trees can fall in love, he said that he had observed trees which "selected certain other trees nearby as objects of their affection and sent out slender tendrils to enfold them in a fond embrace."

The unwisdom shown by Christian missionaries, which has brought Christianity into disrepute in places where at one time it had high rating, is the subject of the "religious editorial" in a well-known Canadian daily of London, Ontario, of February 2nd, 1957, appearing under the caption "A Second Look at our Missions." In many cases the missionaries reflect the prejudices and attitudes of the countries from which they come, and in the name of nationalism support policies which are in flagrant violation of Christian principles, instead of identifying themselves with the aspirations and struggles of the people to whom they go.

> It isn't enough for him to know the New Testament. He must have an understanding of the major currents of his day. He must have an appreciation too, of the culture of the people whom he is commissioned to serve.

The need for humility, "the chief characteristic of a genuine religion," is also emphasized. The arrogant claim which many Christians make, that Christianity is the only true religion, is "an offence to the culture and religions of mankind." It has made it difficult for them to appreciate the aspirations of the millions who live in Asia and Africa. Jesus came

> to illustrate the new life of righteousness, peace and love. Surely He would not want to make Presbyterians, Baptists, Anglicans or Roman Catholics, of his followers....
>
> We make little headway by insisting that our religion is superior. We shall be judged in the last analysis by our fruits. This then, is the conclusion of the matter. It is nonsense for any group to pretend that they are God's chosen people. This leads to arrogance, a withdrawal from others, and the urge to dominate.
>
> God plays no favourites. A Muslim is as likely to find salvation as most Christians in Canada or the United States....

The greatest objection that can be raised against Christian missionaries is that, save in exceptional cases, they have stood between the pure teachings of Jesus and the people to whom they go, by their preachings as by their examples. Christian proselytes are not introduced to the spiritual message of Jesus, but to the church version of Christianity. The activities of Christian missionaries do more harm than good by strengthening the evil of sectarianism.

Gandhiji once wrote:—

> If I had power and could legislate, I should certainly stop all proselytizing. It is the cause of much avoidable conflict between classes and unnecessary heart-burning among missionaries. But I should welcome people of any nationality if they come to serve here for the sake of service. In Hindu households the advent of a missionary has meant the disruption of the family coming in the wake of change of dress, manners, language, food and drink....
>
> If Jesus came to earth again, he would disown many things that are being done in the name of Christianity. It is not he who says "Lord, Lord" that is a Christian but "He that doeth the will of the Lord" that is a true Christian. And cannot he who has not heard the name of Christ Jesus do the will of the Lord?

BOOKS

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

Isis Unveiled
Centenary Anniversary Edition. A photographic reprint of the original edition of 1877. Two volumes bound in one.

The Secret Doctrine
A photographic reprint of the original edition of 1888. Two volumes bound in one.

The Theosophical Glossary
A photographic reprint of the original edition of 1892.

Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge
The Key to Theosophy
The Voice of the Silence
Five Messages
Quotation Book

By W. Q. JUDGE

Vernal Blooms
The Ocean of Theosophy
Letters That Have Helped Me
Echoes from the Orient
The Bhagavad-Gita
Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita
The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali
An Epitome of Theosophy
The Heart Doctrine

By ROBERT CROSBIE

The Friendly Philosopher
Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy

OTHER BOOKS

Light on the Path
Through the Gates of Gold
Because — For the Children Who Ask Why
The Eternal Verities
The Laws of Healing — Physical and Metaphysical
States After Death, and Spiritualistic "Communications" Explained
Cycles of Psychism
Moral Education
Index to The Secret Doctrine
The U.L.T.— Its Mission and Its Future
The Book of Confidences
Hypnotism — A Psychic Malpractice
The Dhammapada
What Is Theosophy?

U.L.T. PAMPHLET SERIES

Pamphlets by Madame H.P. Blavatsky

Nos. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, and 35.

Pamphlets by Wm. Q. Judge

Nos. 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 24, 30, 34, and 36.

Pamphlets by Damodar K. Mavalankar

Nos. 4 and 12.

Pamphlets by the Masters of Wisdom

Nos. 22, 29, and 33.

MAGAZINES

Theosophy—Los Angeles—XLVth Volume
The Aryan Path—Bombay—XXVIIIth Volume
The Theosophical Movement—Bombay—XXVIIth Volume

BULLETINS

Bulletins are available of Lodges in America as well as of the London Lodge in England and the Paris Lodge in France, upon request.

U. L. T. STUDY GROUPS

CALCUTTA, DELHI, MYSORE AND POONA.

Information as to the meeting place and times of meetings may be had from the United Lodge of Theosophists, Bombay.

The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"*The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all.*"

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate; it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished to Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

Correspondence should be addressed to: The U.L.T., 51 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.

U. L. T. LODGES

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